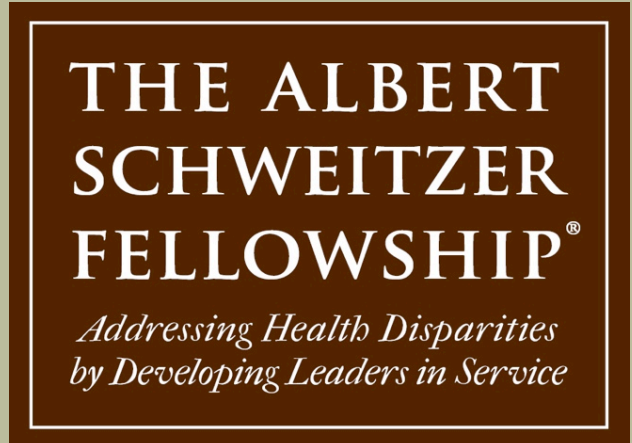


# THE COLUMBUS-ATHENS SCHWEITZER FELLOWS PROGRAM

Purpose: To facilitate service projects to benefit the Columbus and Athens communities, and simultaneously develop emerging professionals who have the skills to address unmet health-related needs throughout their careers.



“Start early to instill in your students awareness that they are on this earth to help and serve others; that is as important to pass on to them as knowledge.”

—Albert Schweitzer, PhD, MD

## EmployAbility

*Improving Workplace Social Skills for Young Adults with Autism*



### Background

“Ninety percent of adults with autism living in the U.S. are either unemployed or underemployed” (Wilkie, 2013).

Individuals with high functioning autism (HFA) have the ability to perform job tasks sufficiently or even beyond expectations, however the social and behavioral impairments common among individuals with high functioning autism can act as a roadblock to obtaining and sustaining employment.

Early preparation and practice building professional and interpersonal skills will help individuals with HFA demonstrate that they have the potential to be an asset to the workforce.

### Population

- Teenagers and young adults with high functioning autism
- Typically, individuals with high functioning autism struggle to socially interact and communicate with others and may demonstrate restrictive and repetitive patterns of behavior and interests.
- Despite these common characteristics, each individual with high functioning autism demonstrates a unique set of symptoms (High Functioning Autism, 2008)

### Partnership

- We were lucky enough to partner with Aspirations Ohio; a social and vocational support group for individuals with high functioning autism.
- Our project served as a spin-off to traditional Aspirations groups and focused solely on employment.



### Weekly Topics

Groups met weekly for 5 sessions consisting of 2 hours each. Topics included:

- Exploring Career Interests and Environmental Best Fits
- Making Yourself Look Good on Paper and the Web
- Interview Skills and Mock Interviews
- Spending Wisely
- Professional Speaker



### Testimonial

“Without EmployAbility, I would have never taken the time to learn about LinkedIn or realized I am capable of working towards becoming a great employee” –  
Becky



Megan Rose  
Robyn Silver  
Occupational  
Therapy

